

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

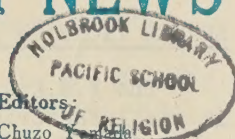
Chairman

Tsunetaro Miyakoda

*Published by the Commission on Public Relations
of the National Christian Council of Japan*

Editors

Chuzo Iwano
Dorothy Burt
Umeko Kagawa



CABLE CODE: JAPACOUNCIL, ADDRESS: CHRISTIAN CENTER, 2,4-CHOME GINZA, TOKYO, JAPAN

Subscription Rates: Japan ¥700, Foreign (Sea mail) \$2.00, (Air mail) \$3.50.

No. 256

August 1 & 15

Summer Seminars.1
Summer Vacation for Working Mothers.2
Japan Christian Year Book to Be Published.2
United Church of Christ Holds 13th General Assembly.2
Japanese Christian Wins Money Prize for Novel.2
The Takahashis of Narugo3
College Girls Summer Caravans to Boseki Dormitories.4
Editor for Christian Activity News Returns Home.4

SUMMER SEMINARS

(1) The Audio Visual Aids Commission and the Church Education Department of the National Christian Council of Japan held their 15th annual seminar on the Audio Visual Aids and Christian Education for the church school teachers and kindergarten teachers from the 22nd to the 25th of July in Karuizawa, with over 400 participants from all parts of Japan. The theme for this year was "Teachers Called by Christ." They studied theory and practiced methods of evangelism and education through the use of Audio Visual Aids.

The lectures were on "Calling and Task of the Teachers," "Responsibilities of Teachers," "Psychology of Education," "Christian Art," "Methods of Exhibition" and "Educational Tasks of Audio Visual Aids." There were 23 workshops dealing with the techniques of telling stories, making Kamishibai (paper-slide picture show), the methods of writing dramas, handling movie projectors, etc.

(2) The eleventh seminar on visitation evangelism, sponsored by the Visitation Evangelism Committee of the National Christian Council, will be held from August 11 to 13 at Shiratori So, a summer resort area. The motto of the seminar is based on the Scripture, I Timothy 4:6: "Let us be good ministers of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith!" Their aim is that laymen and laywomen should be good servants of the Lord in their communities and in the world and that they come to recognize their responsibility as being highly evaluated.

The program is filled with variety-lectures by prominent speakers, witnesses by the laity, group discussions for both beginners and the experienced, and worship services and meditation together. The beginners are taught methods of participating in visitation evangelism, and the advanced workers will share their experiences in an attempt to find more effective ways of visitation.

There will be over 200 participants, both clergy and laity from all parts of Japan.

SUMMER VACATION FOR WORKING MOTHERS

The Y.W.C.A. in Tokyo planned to offer summer vacations to working mothers in small factories, daily manual laborers, and others in most unfortunate living conditions from July 24 to August 8 in a suburb along the seacoast of Tokyo. Members of Christian churches, personnel of local social welfare agencies, and social welfare commissioners and volunteers served as hostesses. They invited 30 mothers at a time, four times during the period. The aim of the plan was to provide a place where the mothers could relax and enjoy themselves. Campfires, handicraft classes, discussion and counseling, clinical consultations were enjoyed and participated in by all. Furthermore, they received money equivalent to their salaries and gifts upon returning their homes.

JAPAN CHRISTIAN YEAR BOOK (1964) TO BE PUBLISHED

The 1964 Japan Christian Yearbook will be on sale early in August and may be ordered from the Kyo Bun Kwan, ¥800 (\$3.00) per copy plus ¥90 postage. It will also be on sale at the various Christian book stores. This issue of the Yearbook is inclusive of all Christian churches and agencies with comprehensive articles covering the various phases of the gospel enterprise in Japan. Six directories are included: (1) Denominational headquarters and Statistics; (2) Christian Schools; (3) Social Work agencies; (4) Other Christian agencies; (5) Mission Boards and societies; (6) List of Protestant missionaries.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST HOLDS 13TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) will hold its 13th General Assembly from October 26-30, 1964, at Fujimicho Church, Tokyo. The 400-member General Assembly is constituted of delegates from the entire church (divided equally between ministers and laymen) and members-at-large. Fraternal delegates from other churches in Japan and overseas will be present as observers. As the highest governing body of the church, the General Assembly elects officers and committee members and makes all major decisions affecting the activities and organization of the United Church.

Following an opening service of worship and a message on the state of the church by The Reverend Dr. Isamu Omura, Moderator, the members of the Assembly will be divided into four working groups to handle recommendations on church life (evangelism, education, social affairs, church building, etc.); faith and order, theological education; organization and personnel; and finances.

Each section will report its findings back to the total General Assembly for action. An important item on the agenda is the proposed headquarters building, voted by a previous General Assembly. Plans for a site and financial arrangements will be discussed.

JAPANESE CHRISTIAN WINS MONEY PRIZE FOR NOVEL

Mrs. Ayako Miura, who operates a commodity store in Asahikawa, Hokkaido, Japan, has won ten million yen (approximately \$25,000) for her novel entitled, The Freezing Point. It took her a year to finish her writing for a novel contest arranged by the Asahi Shimbun, a major, well-read newspaper in Japan. She chose as her theme, original sin.

Mrs. Miura is a graduate of a senior high school and is a former school teacher. For 13 years she fought against tuberculosis of the spine. After she became well, she married and began a different kind of life as a house-wife.

She did her writing after she closed the store at ten o'clock at night, sometimes writing as much as 30 pages and sometimes as little as two or three pages. Her husband assisted her by reading over the pages she wrote and helping her with corrections and re-writing. She commuted to a library to obtain more knowledge of her subject.

Mr. and Mrs. Miura are both practicing Christians. At the same time she was writing her novel, she was also reading the Old Testament at night. She comments that if it is possible she would like to write subsequent novels on the themes of Forgiveness, Love and Life.

THE TAKAHASHI OF NARUGO

In northeast Honshu, Japan, there is a little hot spring town of Narugo, not far from Sendai. Mr. and Mrs. Manzaburo Takahashi live here with their five children. She is the minister of the local church which is part of the United Church of Christ in Japan; he is the director of the authorized nursery school which is connected with the church. The same rooms used on weekdays for the 70 or so children are used on Sunday for the church service and the Sunday school.

They had just about given up hope of getting a bigger place as they have outgrown their present facilities, when some of the church members granted them a site. If everything works out in the way of money, land and workmanship, they will rebuild.

It is a busy household with five children, plus a cat and a dog. They get up at five in the morning so that the two older children can catch a 6:30 train for Furukawa where they attend senior high school. When they return from school they help with the nursery children. Some come by bus from the farthest places, more than a mileaway. The number of the children increases each year.

The church was built more than 40 years ago. There are 40 members and an average attendance of 15. As the church grew, its people grew also and, as in many other places, moved away. A prayer meeting held on Wednesday night is a vital experience for the six to 15 who attend. There is a very close relationship between the members. The congregation is made up of teachers, hotel owners, shopkeepers, nurses - a white collar cross section. There are no farmers because the farms are all across the river in another area.

How does Mrs. Takahashi have time to prepare her sermons? She begins to think about the next one as soon as one is delivered, and on Saturday night it is completed. She regrets that there is little time for visiting in the homes.

Their great dream is to have a retreat house for pastors and their families - those who need the healing of sun, sky and water. They feel that God has set them in this spot where there are about 50 hotels offering hot spring baths. They would like to offer similar accommodations to people in a Christian setting. They have never heard of such a hostel but they would like to start one. It would be simple at first and if the wife came with her husband, she would cook for him.

Mrs. Takahashi was born and brought up in Akita. She attended Sunday school as a girl although her parents were not Christian at the time. It was only after their daughter attended Aoyama Gakuin in the Theological Department where she secured her ministerial training that they were baptized. They have since died. Her brother is a minister working in another prefecture.

Mr. Takahashi is blind. As a child he had measles and his eyes became progressively worse; in the 1940's he lost his sight completely. He cannot read Braille, so she reads to him. They have no record player but they do listen to the radio. His father was not a Christian but his mother was, and so he was baptized. There are two blind Christians in this town and it is their desire to evangelize among others who are blind. Once a month Mr. Takahashi preaches in the church and gives his wife a little respite. She says she likes to hear other people preach. There is little opportunity for study or work with other ministers. Inspiration comes from their daily lives, she tells you.

Mr. Takahashi is a poet and he has written a great deal. At one time he wrote a little poem about the Kokeshi dolls, a type of Japanese doll with no arms or legs. Made of wood, they are charming examples of Japanese art. The poem was set to music and the song is now used all over Japan wherever these dolls are made and is sung by school children. He has been written up in the local papers, national publications and his life story has been presented on television.

It is a touching sight to watch this devoted couple walking through the town hand in hand. He walks in a sprightly manner, trusting her guidance implicitly. Everyone speaks to them and he is constantly bowing to the place from which the voice comes, even with the cars passing all around him. The entire family represents a living witness to the Christ they worship.

COLLEGE GIRLS SUMMER CARAVANS TO BOSEKI DORMITORIES.

The 10th year Caravan of Kobe College Girls to the Factory Girls' Dormitories in Shikoku has just been completed. The report meeting was held July 25 at the home of Rev. and Mrs. Henry D. Jones in Kwansai Gakuin. Along with their program of games, drama, chorus singing plus personal testimony about their Christian faith these girls this year made a new and unique ecumenical demonstration. Miss Carol Wei of Taiwan was a member of the group. She handled her Japanese language well enough to be a part of the witnessing group as well as chorus.

As one of the Kobe College girls reported "As she prayed in her own language in our prayer sessions I felt for the first time the truth that the Christian faith is for all people; that God is the Father of us All".

The Summer Caravan Team to go to the factories in Fukushima Ken will be made up of girls from Aoyama Gakuin, Toyo Eiwa and Ochanomizu Music School. They will be travelling during the period July 27 to August 4. They will be reporting on September 18 on the meaning of their experience.

Other groups might wish to share in learning about their experience. If so, get in touch with Rev. and Mrs. Henry D. Jones, 4 of 7, 5-chome, Denenchofu, Ota-ku Tokyo.

EDITOR FOR CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS RETURNS HOME

Miss Dorothy Burt left Japan on July 23 for her home in the United States of America, via India and Europe, after eighteen months of service here. She served as an editor of the Japan Christian Activity News during past year. Mr. Ronald G. Kover, who was on furlough, will take Miss Burt place from the next issue in September.